

What is the per diem for Houston, TX?

The current per diem for Houston, TX is:

City	Counties	1	2	3	4
HOUSTON	MONTGOMERY, FORT BEND AND HARRIS; L.B. JOHNSON SPACE CENTER	99	47	146	35.25

- 1 = Maximum lodging (excluding taxes)
- 2 = Maximum Meals & Incidental Expenses (M&IE) Rate
- 3 = Maximum Per Diem Rate (Col 1 + Col 2)
- 4 = Maximum Per Diem – Day 1 (First Travel day)

What is a reduced per diem rate?

A reduced per diem rate is a rate that is normally 55% of the full per diem rate (lodging and M&IE) that is authorized when a temporary duty (TDY) assignment exceeds 30 days. A reduced per diem rate is also known as a flat rate.

When does a reduced per diem rate become effective?

If a TDY assignment is scheduled to exceed 30 days, the reduced per diem rate is effective immediately upon starting the TDY. When a TDY assignment that was expected to last less than 30 days is determined to require a TDY in excess of 30 days, a flat rate should be established for the remaining days of the assignment. The Maximum Per Diem is to be reduced to 55% of current per diem as soon as it is determined that the travel will extend beyond 30 days.

What is the reduced per diem rate for Houston, TX?

The reduced per diem for Houston will be:

City	Counties	1	2	3	4
HOUSTON	MONTGOMERY, FORT BEND AND HARRIS; L.B. JOHNSON SPACE CENTER	54.45	25.85	80.30	19.39

- 1 = Maximum lodging (excluding taxes)
- 2 = Maximum M&IE Rate
- 3 = Maximum Per Diem Rate (Col 1 + Col 2)
- 4 = Maximum Per Diem – Day 1 (Last Travel day)

Does the employee have to be notified of the change from full per diem to a reduced per diem rate?

Yes. The employee must be notified of the change in per diem before the effective date of the change. Since changes to the flat per diem rate should be based on cost data the employee should agree with the change.

What lodging costs are included when a long-term lodging agreement is made?

When an employee rents a room, apartment, house, or other lodging on a long-term basis (e.g., weekly, monthly), the following expenses may be considered part of the lodging cost:

- The rental cost for a furnished dwelling; if unfurnished, the rental cost of the dwelling and the cost of appropriate and necessary furniture and appliances (e.g., stove, refrigerator, chairs, tables, bed, sofa, television, or vacuum cleaner);
- Cost of connecting/disconnecting and using utilities;
- Cost of **reasonable** maid fees and cleaning charges;
- Monthly telephone use fee (does not include installation and long-distance calls); and
- If ordinarily included in the price of a hotel/motel room in the area concerned, the cost of special user fees (e.g., cable TV charges and plug-in charges for automobile head bolt heaters).

What happens if an anticipated long-term TDY assignment is curtailed and a long-term lodging arrangement has already been made?

If you enter a long-term lodging arrangement and your temporary duty assignment is curtailed, you must seek to obtain a refund or take steps to minimize the cost to MMS. If you sought to obtain a refund or otherwise took steps to minimize the cost, MMS may reimburse expenses that are not refundable, including a forfeited rental deposit.

Is the M&IE portion of per diem a reimbursable expense when staying with friends or relatives while on TDY?

The M&IE portion of the per diem rate for the area is reimbursable. However, depending on the scheduled length of the TDY will determine the rate at which M&IE will be reimbursed.

What is the M&IE rate if an employee stays with friends or relatives for less than 30 days while on TDY?

If you are staying with friends or relatives (with or without charge), you are entitled to 100% of the M&IE portion of per diem and you may be reimbursed for additional costs your host incurs in accommodating you only if you are able to substantiate the costs and your agency determines them to be reasonable. You will not be reimbursed the cost of comparable conventional lodging in the area or a flat ``token'' amount.

What is the M&IE rate if an employee stays with friends or relatives for more than 30 days while on TDY?

If you are staying with friends or relatives (with or without charge), you are entitled to the reduced rate (55%) of the M&IE portion of per diem and you may be reimbursed for additional costs your host incurs in accommodating you only if you are able to substantiate the costs and your agency determines them to be reasonable, not to exceed 55% of the lodging rate for the area. You will not be reimbursed the cost of comparable conventional lodging in the area or a flat ``token'' amount.

When must an employee on extended TDY file travel vouchers?

Travel vouchers must be submitted at least every 30 days while on extended TDY travel. You must provide a lodging receipt and either a receipt for any authorized expenses incurred costing over \$75, or a reason acceptable to MMS explaining why you are unable to provide the necessary receipt.

Can an employee perform a short-term TDY assignment while on an extended TDY assignment?

Yes. When an employee on extended TDY is required to go to another TDY location for a short period and return to the former location, dual lodging may be authorized. If the employee has entered into a long-term lodging arrangement and it would not be a cost savings to require the employee to leave the long-term lodging arrangement, lodging expenses incurred at both locations would be authorized. Receipts are required for dual lodging claims.

What is the per diem rate when an employee performs a short-term TDY assignment while on an extended TDY assignment?

While at the short-term TDY location, both the lodging and M&IE portion of per diem would be paid at 100% of the per diem for the area. Upon completing the TDY and returning to the extended TDY location, the M&IE and lodging would revert back to the reduced rate.

What privately-owned vehicle (POV) mileage will be paid during an extended TDY assignment?

You will be reimbursed mileage at .405 per mile for the miles driven between your home of residence and your extended TDY location and return to your home of residence upon completion. You will not be reimbursed for your mileage while at your temporary duty station.

How is POV mileage claimed?

The mileage will be reimbursed through the normal travel voucher process.

Can the Government-issued charge card be used for travel expenses while on extended TDY travel?

Yes. Use of the Government charge card is authorized to pay for long-term lodging arrangements, e.g. apartments, utilities, as well as normal travel-related charges. Persons who will be performing temporary travel due to Hurricane Katrina should ensure that their charge card account has been moved into the special option set created for this disaster. This can be accomplished by contacting Robin Robinson at Robin.Robinson@mms.gov or by calling 817-292-7406.

Who should be contacted if other travel questions arise?

Other questions pertaining to travel can be directed to Robert A. Smith in the Finance Division. Robert can be reached at Robert.A.Smith@mms.gov or at 703-787-1487 or Robin Robinson at the e-mail address or phone number in the previous paragraph.